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## News in brief

### Sumpter man dies in Haggerty Road accident

Van Buren Township Public Safety Department officers continue to investigate a recent accident on Haggerty Road, just north of Robbe Road, that killed a 42-year-old Sumpter man.

According to police, officials were dispatched at about 3:45 p.m. on Dec. 9 to the area in response to a reported accident.

Upon arrival, police found a pick-up truck overturned and occupied by William Cook. He suffered fatal injuries as a result of the collision with a tree and subsequent damage caused by the vehicle rolling over and coming to a rest in a ditch, according to reports.

Preliminary investigation showed Cook was traveling northbound on Haggerty Road and, for reasons unknown, crossed into oncoming traffic and traveled some distance before hitting the tree.

No one else was involved in the incident, however, another vehicle in the area did suffer some damage from debris, police said.

Officials are still unclear whether or not the driver suffered a medical condition that led to loss of vehicle control. Alcohol, speed or weather do not appear to be factors, police said.

Anyone with more information is encouraged to call (734) 699-8917.

### Barnhill named to Starfish board

Starfish Family Services recently announced the appointment of Kenneth Barnhill, Jr. to the board of directors.

Barnhill will serve a three-year term and help guide the agency in providing services and proactive programs to vulnerable families in the community. He is also the husband of Starfish's late founder, Ouida Cash.

"We are honored to have Ken join our board of directors. He played an integral role in shaping Starfish, and he is passionate and committed to our mission of helping children and families," said Ann Kalass, CEO of Starfish Family Services. "The agency will continue to flourish under the leadership and vision of exceptional people like Ken."

Barnhill is an entrepreneur who started several businesses in the 1970s, including an apartment management firm in Ann Arbor and a national compact refrigerator renting company for college students.

In 1984, the year Barnhill met Cash, he worked as the Director of Youth Enterprises for Youth Living Centers, the organization that would later become Starfish Family Services. In 1990, Barnhill became vice president of a real estate management firm.

He was elected to the Wayne-Westland School Board and served as the treasurer from 1985-1990.

Starfish Family Services serves more than 7,600 children and their families at numerous service sites each year.



## Meeting needs

Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry sent letters to 300 of their clients in the Romulus area to invite them to pick up a food box from the Ball Road Tabernacle Church on Saturday. Assisting in distributing the 380 boxes of food were members of the Romulus Christian Ministerial Association and laity from Ball Road Tabernacle, Wesleyan Church, Pentecostal Missionary Baptist Church and Community United Methodist Church. Chartwell Food Service, provider for Romulus Community Schools, heard of the food distribution and donated milk that was included in the boxes.

# Snow blankets city, streets

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Six to 12 inches of snow enveloped the Romulus community Friday morning, but public service workers and city employees were able to weather the storm as residents began to dig out.

Tom Wilson, director of public service, said that 20 workers worked round the clock to clear hundreds of miles of local streets, while county workers cleared the main arteries.

"They did a great job," he said. "We knew it was a priority to clear at least a path on the streets so people could get out, go to work and earn a living."

Workers who drive the 20 city

plows worked a nearly 18-hour day to make sure roads were at least manageable during the first snowstorm of the year.

Wilson said the biggest obstacle during this particular storm was the speed of which the snow fell, and the wind that caused drifts throughout the city.

"We went out there to take care of it once, and then later, we had to do it again," he said.

Though the local streets were cleared, there were some noticeable issues with several county roads that run through Romulus – mainly Merriman, Middlebelt, Ecorse, Pennsylvania and Van Born, according to one councilman.

"I heard several comments that

there was quite a difference between the roads that we are responsible for, and the county roads," said Councilman William Crova. "Also, I was told that our roads were better maintained than in some of the communities that surround us."

Wayne County Road Department went through significant budget cuts earlier this year.

Resident compliance was a big factor in getting the snow off the roads, Wilson said.

"As soon as the mayor issued a snow emergency, residents moved their personal vehicles off the road, which makes it easier for us," he said.

See **Snow**, page 3

# Kuderik won't seek mayor's spot

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Tom Kuderik really doesn't know how the rumor got started.

Kuderik, a veteran member of the Romulus Community School Board, will not be seeking the mayor's job in 2009.

"I've thought about it, and it's definitely in the future, but not this time," he said. "I'm doing a lot with the schools, and I'd like to do more in the community, but there's a lot to learn about the mayor's office... If anything, I may run for city council."

So far, only one person has announced that he will seek the mayor's position, and that's the incumbent, Alan Lambert. The mayor made his announcement at an annual Halloween party.

Lambert said Kuderik called him about the mayor's position.

"He told me that he's not running, and he just wanted to set the

"*I'm doing a lot with the schools, and I'd like to do more in the community, but there's a lot to learn about the mayor's office... If anything, I may run for city council.*"

Tom Kuderik

record straight," Lambert said.

Kuderik added that he believes the current mayor is doing a good job.

A potential candidate – Councilman Harry Crout – has emerged as a person who may oppose Lambert, with whom he frequently disagrees on the council. In an interview two weeks ago, Crout said he would make a final decision about whether he will run for mayor in early 2009.

Crout was elected to his current seat in 2005. If he chooses to run, he will be giving up an opportunity

to seek re-election to the council.

The mayor's position is the highest elected office in the city. Whoever is elected to a four-year term will be responsible for about 130 city employees, eight mayor departments, and a budget of about \$23 million.

There typically is not a large field of candidates seeking the job, but it's unlikely that Lambert will run unopposed for the position.

In addition to the mayor's position, seven council seats, and the

See **Mayor**, page 3

# Loans will help residents

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Local officials breathed a sigh of relief Friday after President George W. Bush issued an order that provided \$17 billion of money earmarked for a bank bailout be used to assist two American automakers.

Mayor Alan Lambert praised the deal as one that will help stabilize city and state finances because it gives General Motors and Chrysler Group – the former of which operates an assembly plant in the city – a chance to come up with a plan that will ensure their viability going forward.

"I was glad to hear that the automakers were going to get the aid they need," he said. "Anything that is going to ensure that they can keep their doors open will be good for the area, even though we know they're going to need more from the new President."

### Pain still expected

Automakers will have to meet requirements to take advantage of the loan, and will have to prove that there is a plan in place to become profitable by March. Other provisions have given some legislators pause, such the potential for workers to have to endure further wage cuts.

"We all want to see the Big 3 restructure and be competitive in the future, but it is irresponsible during a time of economic crisis for the White House to insist that workers take further wage cuts on top of the historic concessions they have already made," said Congressman John Dingell (D-Dearborn).

"No one is asking corporate executives to reduce their salaries to levels similar to that of their Japanese counterparts, and no one required the employees of Citibank or AIG to take a pay cut," he added.

Lambert said it's still possible that Romulus could lose more residents because of layoffs or buy-outs at the plant, resulting in a loss of patrons for local businesses and a glut of homes for sale.

The plant is still a big fish in the city, and the surrounding area. Though it's impossible to know how many employees at the engine facility live in Romulus or in western Wayne County, the city and schools receive about \$5.5 million in property and other taxes, according to the Romulus assessor's office.

"That is \$5.5 million that we don't want to see go anywhere, for obvious reasons," Lambert said.

### Others relieved

The Romulus plant produces a variety of V-6 and V-8 engines that power GM full-size SUVs and pickups. More than 928,000 engines were produced in the 2007 calendar year, according to numbers provided by the automaker.

State lawmakers also expressed relief, but noted that

See **Loan**, page 3

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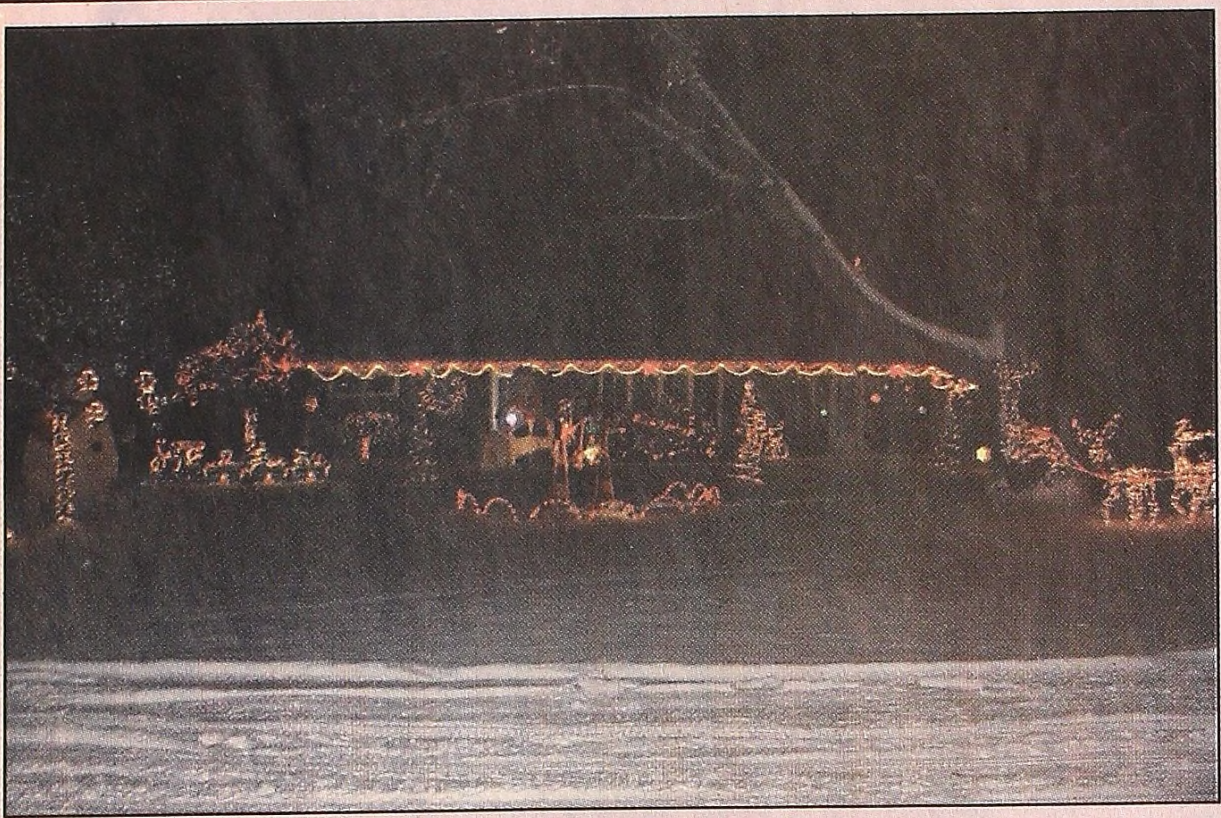
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## Let there be light

The Van Buren Township Parks and Recreation Department recently announced the winner of the annual Holiday Lights Home Decorating Contest. Nancy McGuire, who lives on Mom's Drive in the township took top honors this year. Judging took place Dec. 17, when township officials randomly visited homes in the area to find the winner. McGuire received a gift certificate from Applebee's.



# School program is lauded

Andrea King  
Staff Writer

The new Strategy to Overcome Obstacles and Avoid Recidivism (SOOAR) program is already making a beneficial impact on students, according to officials at the alternative education school.

"It started off rough because there was some student resistance, but it has and will benefit students," said Saul Davis, principal at the school.

"It deals with issues in the past, their success in school and for them to know there are other options out there," he added.

The expulsion and diversion program, funded through a grant, is designed to target individuals before the time of expulsion. It's a priority to get those students into the program as a form of treatment for issues like substance abuse, anger management and class fail-

ure, according to Valarie Bonner, executive director of Beacon Life Skills.

"Things like behavior management, homework help and other community skills and behavior learning is included," she said. "We do an intake on each child and parent to see what the problem is, then personal management, how to learn effective study habits and be in the community effectively; most importantly agree to disagree."

Although the program is still new to the schools, it has been done before in prisoner re-entry, but was modified for children.

"It wraps around the approach, looking at what's going on with the child, at home, in person and at school," said Bonner.

"We've already seen students bring their grades up and it's helped them," she added.

"I was eager to endorse this program," said Ralph Nodwell, treasur-

er of the Van Buren Public School Board. "It's a great opportunity to bring back to students of Van Buren who might have problems and can benefit from this program."

SOOAR is a four-day a week program after school. Davis said it's a case management approach before students get to the expulsion phase.

"There's a misconception at the alternative education," he said. "We wanted to do something to address those issues of students thinking they have to adhere a certain way and see if those issue are salvageable, if not then find the best avenue for them to be successful. If not here, then where?"

"All and all it helps to breed a better school environment," Davis added.

The program continues to look for volunteer teachers, tutors or resources. To help or for more information, contact the school at (734) 697-6549.

# 3 men arrested in series of break-ins

Three suspects await charges stemming from a recent home invasion in Van Buren Township.

Police apprehended three males recently who were believed to be involved in home invasions that occurred in Van Buren, located in the subdivision of Greenbrier, Charter Club and Andover, according to police reports.

When the incidents were reported, one caller gave police a description of a suspicious vehicle that was in the driveway of one of the homes in the Greenbrier Subdivision, police said.

A short time later, a Van Buren officer located the suspected vehicle occupied by three males in Parkwood Manor. Officers saw electronic equipment similar to that which had been reported stolen inside the passenger compartment of the vehicle. A further search revealed electronic equipment and games in the trunk, along with computer components and a plastic tub with coins.

The three suspects were taken into custody and, stolen items from the other break-ins were found on one of the suspects, according to police.

A search warrant was later executed at one of the suspect's residences where large quantities of DVDs, stereo equipment, large flat screen TVs, computer components, jewelry and wrapped Christmas presents that had been reported

stolen were found.

The suspects are believed to be involved in other break-ins that occurred recently in Canton Township. Canton officials will be working with Van Buren Township in developing the home invasion cases, police said.

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- **VALKYRIE** (R) TH 4:25, 7:10, 9:55  
FRI-TH 11:05, 1:45, 4:25, 7:10, 9:55
- **MARLEY & ME** (PG) TH 4:20, 7:00, 9:40  
FRI-TH 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40
- **THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG-13) TH 3:10, 6:30, 9:50  
FRI-TH 11:35, 3:10, 6:30, 9:50
- **YES MAN** (PG-13) TH 4:30, 7:05, 9:30  
FRI-TH 11:45, 2:10, 4:30, 7:05, 9:30  
FRI/SAT LS 11:50
- **THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX** (G)  
TH 4:10, 6:45 FRI-TH 11:50, 2:00, 4:10, 6:45  
**FOUR CHRISTMASSES** (PG-13)  
DAILY 3:30, 5:35, 7:40, 9:45 FRI/SAT LS 12:00  
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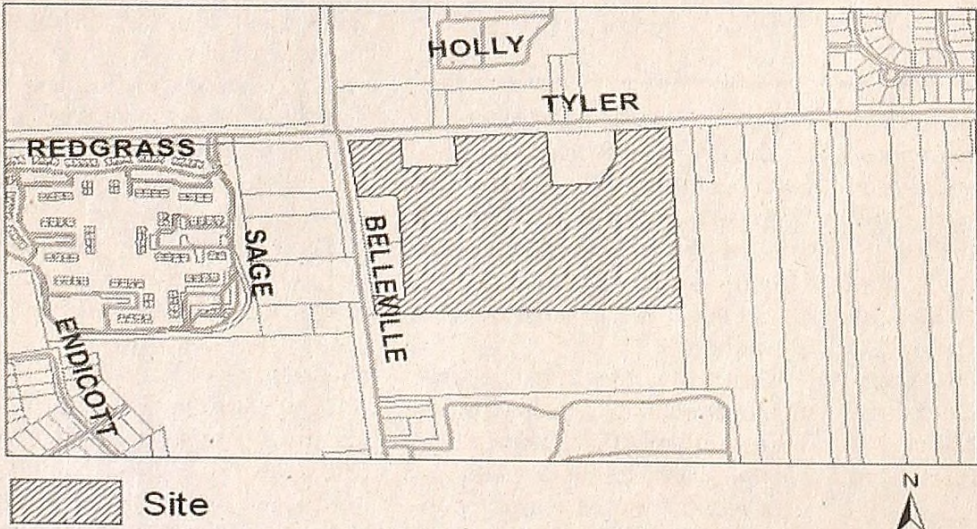
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## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Charter Township of Van Buren Board of Trustees will hold a public hearing on Tuesday January 13, 2009 at 7:30 p.m., in the Board of Trustees Room, 46425 Tyler Road, Charter Township of Van Buren, Wayne County, Michigan.

The Public Hearing relates to the following described property:  
This is a portion of parcel with the tax ID number V125-83-058-99-0006-705. This property is located on the east side of Belleville Road between the North I-94 Service Drive and Tyler Road

A map indicating the location of the subject site is included below.



The applicant, Meijer Inc., is requesting special use approval. A special use approval is required for a Drive-in Pharmacy per Section 12.03 (d) of the Zoning Ordinance. Written comments will be accepted at the Department of Developmental Services until 5:00 p.m., January 13, 2008.

In the spirit of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals with a disability should feel free to contact the Department of Developmental Services, at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting, if requesting accommodations.

Posted: December 18, 2008  
Publish: December 24, 2008

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# Backers regroup after smoke-free ban defeat

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

The failure of the proposed smoke-free workplace bill in the Michigan Senate incensed backers, but leaves open the possibility of revisiting the idea in 2009.

Sen. Ray Basham (D-Taylor) has supported such a bill for 10 years, but a provision that would exempt casinos, cigar bars and race tracks derailed the legislation after bipartisan committee discussions moved into the early-morning hours of Friday.

Basham said the chasm between lawmakers was caused by the provision that would have required all workplaces to ban smoking.

“I am absolutely crestfallen over this, as close as we came to seeing this effort through only to come up empty-handed, it’s very difficult,” said Basham.

The 2007-2008 legislative year saw more major milestones for smoke-free workplaces

than ever before, culminating in the passage of bills by both the State House and Senate — yet it came to a close with no bills reaching final passage. Multiple compromise proposals were brought to the table that had the potential to bridge the differences on both sides of the issue, but they never made it past the committee.

But backers of the legislation do not believe the idea of smoke-free workplaces is dead yet.

“I haven’t given up hope over the last 10 years, and I don’t plan to start now. Going into year 11, this will remain my top priority, and I don’t care whose name is on the bills as long as this issue gets some traction,” Basham said.

Where there’s smoke . . .

The smoke free bills would have banned smoking from all workplaces in Michigan to protect the health of workers in the state.

In January, the legislation may have a bet-

ter chance of passing because of changes in the make-up of the House, which will see 46 new members as a result of the November elections, said State Rep. Robert Constan (D-Inkster), who voted to approve the original bill.

“I do think we’ll see a change soon,” he said.

“I think (the smoking ban) is in the best interest of the state,” Constan added. “It’s unfortunate that it wasn’t resolved.”

State Rep. Richard LeBlanc (D-Westland) agreed.

“I would suspect that there will be people lining up to get various versions of the bill drafted,” said LeBlanc. “Over the course of the last two years, I voted for it three times.”

Although not an original proponent of the smoking ban legislation, LeBlanc said that his stance on the issue changed over time, in part due to viewpoints streaming in from constituents.

In all, he said that about 88 percent of the

communication he received from residents on the topic favored a smoking ban.

LeBlanc stressed that only time will tell how the situation will be resolved, but speculated that that chances of it passing would be improved if the bill exempted casinos.

“It would bring possibly enough people on board to get the legislation passed,” he said.

Basham said is not prepared to abandon the smoke-free concept, citing support in the community.

“This is certainly a setback, but not a defeat,” he said.

“I will keep pushing for the health of all men, women and children in this state, and if the Legislature won’t take action on behalf of the people, I’ll see to it that we put this issue on the ballot and before the voters. I know I will see smoke-free air for all Michigan workers some day, it’s just too bad it won’t be today.”

— Staff Writer Meghan Chatham contributed to this report.

## Calendar of events

### Snowman contest set

Artists young and old will be able to participate in a contest that will answer a burning question: Who can build the best snowman?

Sponsored by the Romulus Parks and Recreation Department, the “Let’s Build a Snowman” contest will take place through February. To enter, snow sculptors must call the recreation department and a representative will come to the contestant’s home to photograph the masterpiece.

Snowmen or women, snow-made sculptures and forts will be judged.

At the end of the contest, all entries will be judged and prizes awarded.

For more information, or to schedule a photo session, call (734) 941-8665.

### Christmas bowling rolls on

Bowlers who want to spend the Christmas season striking out will be able to do so Dec. 29, when Michael B’s Bowling Alley offers Christmas Bowling.

The annual event is co-sponsored by Romulus Parks and Recreation.

The event will include two games, shoe rental, dinner and monetary prizes for the cost of \$20 per ticket.

The \$20 fee is for a one adult, one child couple.

Pre-registration is required.

For more information, or to register, call the senior center at (734) 955-4120.

### Youth basketball teams forming

The Romulus Recreation Department is accepting applications for the youth basketball program, which will continue from Jan. 12 to April 24.

Practices are from 5:50-9 p.m. on varying days of the week, Monday through Friday, depending on team assignments. All games are from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

Teams will be broken down by grades.

The games will take place at Romulus High School, Romulus Middle School and selected Romulus elementary schools.

The cost for the program is \$70 for one child, \$130 for two immediate family members, \$180 for three immediate family members and \$220 for four immediate family members. All prices include a team jersey.

For more information, call (734) 941-8665.

### Municipal offices announce holiday closures.

Romulus City Hall and the 34th District Court will be closed on Wednesday, Dec. 24 and Thursday, Dec. 25, in observance of the Christmas holiday.

The same offices will also be closed on Wednesday, Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, for the New Year holiday observance.

### Senator is honored

State Sen. Tupac Hunter (D-Inkster) was honored by the advocacy group Michigan’s Children with the Legacy Hero Award.

This is the ninth year that the group has honored legislators for their work for children. Hunter is the sponsor of legislation to require insurance companies to cover the cost of treatment programs for autism, and legislation that would create an autism research fund.

He also is the sponsor of a resolution encouraging Congress to enact the Teacher Education for Autistic Children Act.

He has also introduced resolutions calling on Congress to enact the federal Protecting Children’s Health in Schools Act, and a resolution calling on Congress to enact the School-Based Health Clinic Establishment Act of 2007.

Hunter received the award on Dec. 9.

## Snow

FROM PAGE 1

At the Monday night city council meeting, elected officials praised the workers for helping to keep streets passable during the downpour.

As soon as the snow fell, they were on the streets clearing the roads so we could get out,” said Councilman John Barden. “They deserve all of the praise they are getting (for the handling of the

storm).

Mayor Pro-Tem Randy Gear agreed.

“I just want to thank all of our DPS workers forgetting the job done,” he said. “The snow just came down out there – it was really tough.”

The storms were the first in what is expected to be an active winter. Wilson said the city will have the resources to keep Romulus safe during the dog days of winter.

“Our goal is to make sure it’s safe out there,” he said.

## Mayor

FROM PAGE 1

city clerk and city treasurer seats will also be up for grabs.

All elected posts in the city serve four-year terms.

For now, Kuderik is happy steering policy with his colleagues on

the school board.

“There’s so much that going on in the economy, and so much going on with the schools,” he said. “I like working with the kids, and I want to make sure the schools are in good hands.”

“All I can say right now is that I have a lot to think about,” Kuderik added.

# Exemptions could mean opportunities

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Industrial exemption tax breaks could be greatly expanded if Gov. Jennifer Granholm signs a recently approved state Senate bill.

The bill – SB 218 – would expand the eligibility requirements to obtain an industrial facilities exemption certificate, encouraging economic development and plant rehabilitation in industrial areas.

The impetus for the legislation is to retain industrial businesses and jobs during a long rough patch in the state economy, said State Sen. Ray Basham, a sponsor of the bill.

“As our economy struggles, especially in the industrial and manufacturing sectors, we should be doing everything in our power to incentivize and ease development,” said Basham.

“Doing what we can to stimulate rehabilitation and rejuvenation of existing sites reduces sprawl and waste of space, and helps generate economic development in existing corridors of activity,” he added.

Industrial Facilities Exemptions provide manufacturing companies the ability to apply for 50 percent tax breaks on business improvements. Though the

breaks make it more likely that businesses will stay in Michigan, giving a tax abatement to businesses can be a thorny proposition.

Businesses qualify for the abatements if they can receive support from the municipality where the businesses are located. Municipal governments are facing a laundry list of their own problems including a loss of state shared revenue, and a loss in property taxes.

“I guess that anything that is going to give businesses an advantage in this climate is something we’re going to have to do, but it still gives us pause,” said Romulus Mayor Alan Lambert.

“We can’t just give away the bank,” he added.

The changes put into place by the bill would amend the Plant Rehabilitation and Industrial Development Act under which property tax abatements can be granted by local units of government to new and speculative buildings and to replacement facilities.

The bill would also create a general exception that would allow a facility located in an industrial development district to qualify for a property tax abatement even if procedural error is made, as long as the facility met all other criteria of the act and had received written

approval from the chairman of the Michigan Economic Growth Authority.

Municipalities use a myriad of requirements locally to determine the length of the tax break, which can by law go up to 12 years.

Those criteria include jobs created or the potential loss of jobs, the value of improvements, and the length of time of the business relationship between the city and the municipality, among others.

Some office holders hope the expansion will provide more opportunities, even as they wonder about the fiscal future of the municipality they serve.

“I do think that we need to try to bring more businesses into our city, but I have to say that I’m against giving out a tax break for any longer than two years, said Michael Greene, a councilman from Inkster.

“Eventually, the dollars are going to have to be made up from residents,” he added.

Businesses in the immediate western Wayne County area that have received tax abatements during the past five years include General Motors and Aztec Manufacturing, both in Romulus, Livernois Vehicle Development in Inkster, and ArtCraft Pattern and U.S. Farathane, both of Westland.

# Car interlock legislation approved

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Drivers caught operating a vehicle with a blood alcohol level of .15 or above will now be required to have an ignition lock placed on their vehicles.

State House Bill 4289 was approved by the Michigan Legislature Dec. 18 in a marathon session. The bill was forwarded on to the State Senate where it was approved. It now heads to Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who is expected to sign it into law, said State Rep. Robert Constan, one of the sponsors.

“This legislation has been in Lansing for about five years now,” said Constan. “Drunk drivers are dangerous, and this plan will allow us to take real action against those who pose a serious threat to the safety of Michigan drivers.”

“Alcohol ignition interlock devices have proven to be an effective tool in the battle against drunk driving, but only one out of 10 convicted drunk drivers currently has an interlock on their vehicle. It’s time Michigan takes action to crack down on extreme drunk driving in order to keep our roads and residents safe.”

Different degrees

Michigan law specifies that a person driving with a blood alcohol level of .08 is legally drunk. The .15 provision in the bill is considered extremely intoxicated, Constan said.

“At that level, a person would be falling down drunk, and would likely be on the verge of passing out,” said Constan.

The bill also has provisions that would require repeat offenders to invest in the lock.

Interlock devices connect to the ignition and check for the presence of alcohol in the driver.

The driver must blow into the machine in order to start the car and continue to periodically blow into the device to continue operating the vehicle. If the interlock device senses alcohol, the car will not start or it will shut the car off. New technology has made the locks more useful to law enforcement, Constan said.

“There are voice-recognition features on the locks that act almost as a fingerprint to prevent someone else from blowing into the device,” he said.

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), 58 percent of alcohol-related traffic fatalities involve drivers with a blood alcohol level of 0.15 or higher. MADD also says that extremely drunk drivers are 382 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than a sober driver.

MADD fought for the law since the inception of the interlocks, and praised approval of the bill.

Nechole McClendon, a program specialist for Wayne County-MADD, said the locks are an integral part of the effort to eliminate drunk driving.

“We’re very pleased that the bill

was approved,” she said. “We would have liked to see it required for first-time offenders at the nationally recognized .08, but this is definitely a step in the right direction.”

Drivers who are stopped will have to purchase the lock. If they cannot afford it, and interlock company will install it, and the driver will have to pay \$1 per day for a period to be determined by the court.

Other states

Constan said Michigan is the 40th state to enact an ignition lock law.

“We looked at laws in other states leading up to this,” he said.

The bill received, in both the House and Senate, overwhelming bipartisan support. It was approved in the House by a margin of 104-1.

The ability of both Democrats and Republicans to reach a consensus last Thursday made the bill one of a handful that was approved by both the House and Senate, Constan added.

“Innocent lives are on the line every time a drunk driver starts their car and hits the road,” Constan said.

“This is an essential plan that toughens penalties for drunk drivers and their reckless actions. I am pleased that my colleagues in the House and Senate reached across the aisle to approve this plan and put the protection of Michigan drivers first.”

## Loan

FROM PAGE 1

the state had previously been asked for – and gave – assistance to the Big Three. That request was granted two years ago, said State Sen. Richard LeBlanc.

“What they asked for was con-

sideration within the Michigan Business Tax and they received it,” said LeBlanc.

Since then, LeBlanc said that he was not aware of any other requests for aid that have been made to the State of Michigan on the behalf of the automakers.

For individuals caught between the foundering companies and the

difficult economy who could potentially lose their jobs as the companies reshape themselves, there is little in the works at the state level to help, LeBlanc said.

“The things that have been in place are still in place,” he said. “It’s still not enough.”

— Staff Writer Meghan Chatham contributed to this report.



# OPINION

## Important legislation requires party cooperation

There were plenty of hits and misses last week as most legislative bodies adjourned for the holidays. Here are two things that warrant future attention when those bodies reconvene next year.

In the state Legislature, a proposed ban on smoking in the workplace ultimately fell flat after a provision to exempt cigar bars, casinos and race tracks didn't pass muster.

This is really common sense legislation and it needs to be approved. The latest versions of the bills—which have been in the works for nearly a decade now—protect those they are supposed to protect and still allow for the types of businesses that cater to—or at

least tolerate—smokers to flourish.

Anti-smoking legislation has been in approved in many other states and it's time to Michigan to catch up with them.

The second is a proposed amendment to the way the Wayne County parks millage is distributed. The proposal—which received a lot of attention in the waning days of the 2008 election cycle—would guarantee a return of 25 percent of the tax revenue to the municipalities. Currently, the funding is geared toward the Wayne County Parks system—as county officials say it should be—and leftover funds are provided back to the communities in the form of grants. The prob-

”

*Anti-smoking legislation has been in approved in many other states and it's time to Michigan to catch up with them.*

lem, according to commissioners who promoted the change, is that there is no equity in the way the grants are distributed and there is a tendency to use the funds as political favors. (See story, page 5)

It's easy to understand both sides. This millage, while successful in its attempt, has stirred up con-

sternation from officials who haven't seen the immediate impact of it—and, with 43 municipalities in Wayne County, many of whom do not host a Wayne County Park, there's plenty of them to go around.

At the same time, the millage has been used the way it was intended to.

This is a fight that will continue, however, unless some kind of compromise is reached. It expires at the end of 2010 and, if everyone is not happy with it by then, there is little chance that it will be renewed—and the residents of Wayne County will suffer for it.

At the very least, this millage should not be treated like a frayed rope used in a tug of war contest between the county and the locals, each trying to protect their own programs and workers.

As a new year dawns and many new elected representatives officially take their seats, we hope for cross-party cooperation on these and other important issues.

Santa tries to go "GREEN"...  
and use an alternative for a LUMP OF COAL....



## Current projects enough for now

As the year draws to a close, members of the Northville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) board are mulling a change in the district borders.

The idea is to bring in at least two new areas—the green space behind Northville City Hall and the Northville library, as well as the Mill Race Historical Village—in order to provide funding for more programs there. Other areas of the city, such as the property surrounding the old Belanger building—known as Cady Town—and the Northville Downs racetrack property are under consideration, too.

We like that the board is looking to the future in this way, but we don't think this is the right time to change the DDA. There are too many uncertainties facing the existing revenue stream—stemming from a housing and commercial market that has proved troublesome to predict—as well as too many projects that have yet to be completed.

## My Christmas wish? Some common sense

By the time you read this, Christmas will be right on top of us—if not already gone.

It's been a difficult year for many of us, but there's still time left to reflect on all the positives and plant the seeds of hope for the coming year.

As I take a look back and try to come up with a 'wish list' for the many communities I cover, it's tough to narrow down too many things. The lists are long for the needs are many, but I believe if we all work together then we can overcome whatever difficulties lay ahead.

So that's my first Christmas wish: some common sense. I hope this holiday brings about a new sense of peace and cooperation between residents and leaders that will bring about a new age of prosperity. It would be nice if the con-

cept of goodwill to all men would survive, say, a contentious budget session or tricky piece of legislation.

In Canton, one of my Christmas wishes is already coming to be. Representatives from Wal-Mart indicated recently that they'll soon be removing the old cement factory at Michigan Avenue and Canton Center Road (or Belleville Road, depending on if you're on the north or south side of Michigan). It will be a while before the new store will be up and running of course, but it'll be nice to have that eyesore gone once and for all.

I also hope for the continued prosperity of the township, despite the major change of leadership there.

In Northville Township, I hope the board finds some of the respect and goodwill they deserve

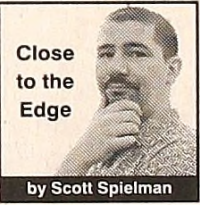
wrapped up in a convenient package. They've taken a lot of hits, lately, for things they didn't have much control over. The agreement between the township and the developer of the former Northville Psychiatric Hospital—agreed to at the eleventh hour, after plenty of negotiation from both sides—has stung residents and officials alike. Members of the board have been criticized for trying to look out for their residents. There needs to be unity, not blame, on this project going forward or the painful lessons learned last year will be for naught.

Officials in the City of Wayne—and everywhere else, I suppose—will need some smaller belts as they go through the budget process this year. It's going to be a difficult year for many municipalities, but Wayne has been particularly hard

hit by the economy and fortunes of the Big 3 automakers.

On that note, I had two more requests, one small and one large. First, I have a Christmas wish that someone would disable the traffic light in front of the Ford Motor plant since it will be idle for the next several months. I'm tired of stopping there!

I also hope that we all find a new sense of patriotism under the proverbial tree. Anyone in the market for a new car should consider a domestic car, first and foremost, now more than ever. If you can't find a Ford you like, look for a Chevy. If you can't find a Chevy, look for a Dodge. There are plenty of options out there and our biggest companies deserve our support—and trust.



Close to the Edge

by Scott Spielman

## Call me freshly disgruntled

I left the last Belleville City Council meeting more annoyed than usual.

Something that's normally a routine agenda in the city—and typically just housekeeping sort of items—got under my skin: the appointments to boards and commissions.

New appointments—made by the mayor—had to be made for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the Planning Commission, the Cemetery Advisory Committee, the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the Board of Review. Officials started with the DDA, which showed Ryan Taylor (as a property interest member) with a term to expire Dec. 31, 2012 and

resident Ken Voigt (as a non-property interest member), also with a term to expire Dec. 31, 2012.

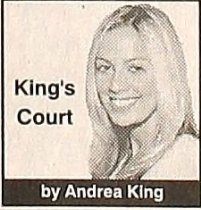
Mayor Richard Smith said he recommended the two because they're a fresh voice for the board. They would replace Shawna Austin and Frank Brown.

That's when Councilman George Chedraue spoke-up in an objection to the 'fresh' voices and stated that both members who will be leaving the DDA board do so at a time when they are needed. Austin, a downtown businessowner, has been instrumental in the work of the DDA façade program, while Brown has also done his fair share of progress for the group. Why stop that progress now?

Taylor, who doesn't live in the city, comes to the DDA as a financial agent whose family has a history in Belleville, which includes a business. To my knowledge, I don't think he's ever been on a board or commission, so I'll give you that one as a new voice.

Voigt, a resident of the city, former member of the planning commission and a 14-year member of the DDA, however, is not exactly a new voice or new blood.

Sure, he's been off the board for 9 years and I mean no offense to him personally as I say this, but if



King's Court

by Andrea King

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# Proposed parks millage change is vetoed

Scott Spielman  
Editor

A ordinance to change the way the Wayne County Parks millage is dispersed has stalled at the Wayne County Commission.

The ordinance, proposed by County Commissioners Kevin MacNamara (D-Canton), Laura Cox (R-Livonia) and Bernard Parker (D-Detroit), was vetoed by County Executive Bob Ficano earlier this month. After an unsuccessful attempt to override the veto, the issue has been referred back to the Ways and Means Committee.

“If we don’t get enough for a 10-vote override, we’ll probably work within the commission to come up with a compromise on a new ordinance,” said MacNamara.

The commission has 45 days to come up with the 10 votes necessary to override the veto. The Ways and Means Committee doesn’t meet again until January.

The ordinance would have changed the way the .25 mill

levy voters approved in 1996 was distributed, guaranteeing that 25 percent of the taxes sent to the county would be returned to each respective municipality. They remaining 75 percent would go toward maintaining and operating Wayne County parks.

Alan Helmcamp, assistant Wayne County executive, said he and the remainder of the county administration had been opposed to the change since it was proposed earlier this year.

“It’s never been intended to return money back,” said Helmcamp of the millage. “There’s a feel good quality to it and it would be a nice thing to do, but it’s not what this millage was put in place to do.”

Voters approved the millage in 1996 to improve the Wayne County parks system, he said. It generates about \$12.7 million per year, money that is funneled into Hines Park, Elizabeth Park, the Chandler Water Park in Detroit and the Fort Wayne Park. It also provides dedicated funding at facilities like the Nankin Township Interpretive Center in the Westland portion of Hines Park.

Local officials have been critical of the millage since many—particularly those in western Wayne County—pay more into the fund than they receive in funding. In Canton Township, where there is no county park facility, township taxpayers supply about \$1 million per year and have only received about \$600,000 in grants since the millage went into effect.

MacNamara and Cox said that, since they believed the county parks system could operate on 75 percent of the millage funding, the remainder should be returned to the local municipalities on an equal basis, a percentage of the amount they paid. That would remove politics from the grant approval process, they said.

Helmcamp said, though, that the millage was put in place for Wayne County parks, not parks in Wayne County. It was designed to revitalize the Wayne County parks system—and it has worked.

“Any change and we would lose all we have gained,” he said. “We’ve got to keep the county parks maintained.”

# Grant will aid expansion of agency service

Molly Tippen  
Staff Writer

Inkster-based Starfish Family Services has received a \$100,000 grant from the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation to aid teens facing mental and behavioral challenges.

The money will be used to implement the Family Psycho Education (FPE) program, which aids adolescents ages 13-17 that are under the care of Lifespan Clinical Services, a division of Starfish. The organization is one of the first provider agencies in Wayne County to implement FPE with this age group.

“We are grateful for the generous grant from the Ethel and James

Flinn Foundation,” said Ann Kalass, CEO of Starfish Family Services. “We are proud to be a catalyst in the implementation of the Family Psycho Education program to help Wayne County area teens who struggle with mental illness.”

Family Psycho Education is a nationally-recognized program that originated in the late 1970s. It recognized that resources were lacking for patients and family members living with a mental illness. FPE evolved into a program that empowers clients and family members with information and coping skills, helping to strengthen family support and create a greater chance for improvement for the client.

The implementation of the program will assist in the Starfish goal to decrease admissions into hospitals, residential settings and other out-of-home placements.

Currently, there is a gap in services that is evident by the family members’ low level of involvement in the treatment process, according to research by Starfish. With the population of children and adolescents with schizophrenia, schizo-affective disorders and psychotic disorders, the involvement of the family is imperative to the successful recovery of clients.

Lifespan will utilize a tracking system that is already in place for clients to provide the data needed to

measure the success of the FPE implementation.

“Our goal is to provide innovative and effective care so that teens facing mental challenges can live a productive and happy life,” Kalass said.

Lifespan is a division of Starfish Family Services and provides behavioral, emotional and mental health services to children and families throughout Wayne County. Lifespan clinicians, psychologists and psychiatrists specialize in diagnosing and treating all kinds of emotional difficulties, working with children, teenagers, adults and entire families. Therapy is offered at clinics in Livonia and Westland as well as within the client’s home.

Starfish Family Services offers programs to help educate and empower vulnerable families and children in Western Wayne County. The agency serves more than 7,600 children and their families at numerous service sites each year.

The Flinn Foundation is a Detroit-based private foundation established in 1976 by the late Ethel “Peggy” Flinn and her brother James H. Flinn Jr. Jim Flinn, Jr., who was diagnosed with schizophrenia in his early 20s, led a productive life until his death in 2007 at the age of 91. Since inception, more than \$13 million in grants has been awarded. The annual grant making budget of the foundation is \$3.2 million.

## Fresh

FROM PAGE 4

you say you want a fresh, new voice, then you should make it one. I certainly think his experience will be handy and needed, but I agree with Chedraue who voted ‘no’ on the DDA appointments and I commend him for his stance on the vote.

No offense to the new appointed members and all, but where is the

fresh, new voice there? When I think of ‘new’ ideas, I think of literally someone new, who has never been on the board or commission. Ever.

Councilmembers later voted for other boards and commissions, including resident Henry Kurczewski, Michael Hawkins, Amy Jordan and Thomas Smith for the Planning Commission, Bob Stoner to the Cemetery Advisory Committee, Ralph Mayer to the Brownfield Redevelopment

Authority and James Graham to the Board of Review. Those seemed to be less controversial, but I can’t help but think are certain city officials more interested in appointing their ‘friends’ to these boards and commissions, rather than doing so in a fair and equal process.

I would hate to think of our political system as unjust. But maybe the way these board members are appointed needs to be reworked to prevent even the appearance of any such tactics.

## Projects

FROM PAGE 4

be a better way to come up with the money.

As far as Cady Town is concerned, it appears that a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority district would be a better

funding mechanism than an expansion of the DDA. It provides the same general type of tax capture, but allows for more flexibility in the funding of it.

Members of the Northville DDA should be congratulated for looking ahead and ensuring there will be plenty of changes that will help keep the downtown area fresh and vibrant.

That’s enough for now, though.

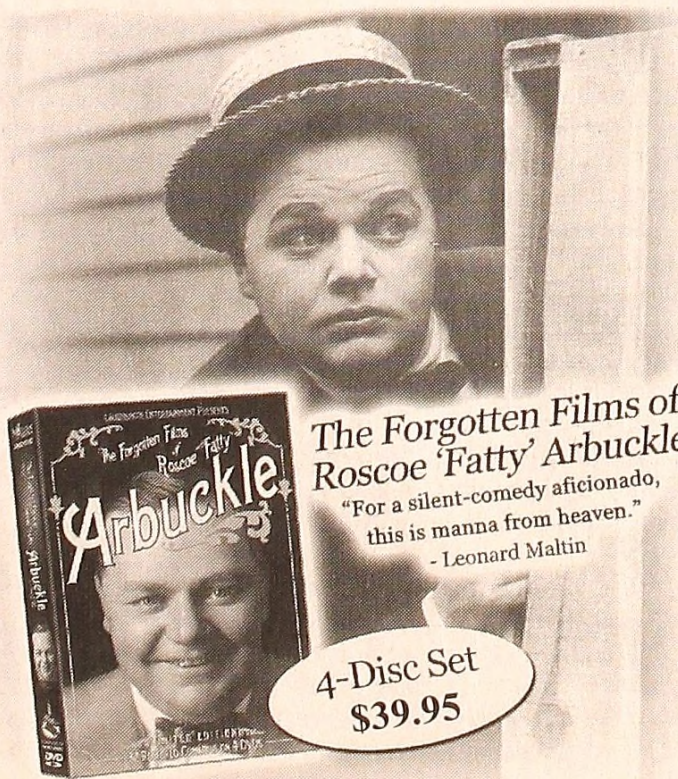
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# SPORTS

## Next Level selects All-Area football teams

Jeff Novak  
Staff Writer

Christmas came early this year for area football players. Jason Malloy, the president, founder and director of the Next Level Football Camp, recently decided to play Santa Claus. He made a list of all the football stars in the area and checked it twice to see who was naughty and nice this season. He found 23 players deserving enough to make the list for his Annual Next Level All-First and

squad. Leading the troupe on the First team was the versatile junior quarterback Devin Gardner. If he wasn't the best quarterback in 2008, he will be in 2009. His rocket arm and ability to avoid tackles in the backfield and run for huge gains was instrumental in getting the Vikings back to Ford Field. At 6-foot-2 and 220 pounds, senior wide receiver Cameron Gordon had the great hands and big-play capabilities to be Inkster's go-to guy. Alan Freeman might be the



Inkster junior Devin Gardner was selected as the quarterback for the Next Level All-First team.



Glenn standout Jerome Scales, a senior quarterback, earned a spot on the Next Level All-Second team.

All-First team
<b>Offense</b>
QB-Devin Gardner-Inkster
QB- Andrew Dillon Lincoln
RB-Nick Hill-Chelsea
RB-Austin White-Stevenson
WR-Evan Kourtjian - Saline
WR-Donald Spenser-Ypsilanti
WR- Cameron Gordon-Inkster
OL- Charlie Chapman-Carlton Airport
OL-Esham Farha-Pioneer
OL-Mason Cole-Bedford
OL-Justin Sneddon-Canton
QB-Nadar Farha-Pioneer
<b>Defense</b>
DB-Brandis Yarrington-Pioneer
DB-Alan Freeman-Inkster
DB-Hassan Amen-Fordson
DB-Mark Grisa-Stevenson
DL-Dylan Farrington-Adrian
LB-Nores Fsradi-Dearborn
LB-Keith Marks-Willow Run
LB-Matt Price-Saline
LB-Denzel Richmond-Inkster
DL-David Box-Milan
DL-Brandon Lane-Stevenson

All-Second Team
<b>Offense</b>
QB-Frankie Popp-Brother Rice
QB-Jordan Kaufman-Ubly
QB-Jerome Scales-John Glenn
QB- Ian Thomas -Highland Park
RB- Ali Alaboody-Fordson
RB-Richard Haley-Wayne
WR-Ricky Griffin-Pioneer
WR- Jeremy Jackson-Huron
WR-Rod Barksdale-Ypsilanti
OL-James Vazquez- Robichaud
OL-Mariquis Wallace -Inkster
QB-Terrance Moore -Ypsilanti
<b>Defense</b>
DB- Daniel Lindsey Kennedy
DB-Antonie Robinson-Southfield
DB-Louis Stevenson Harris-Highland Park
DB-Mahmoud Alriffeh-Dearborn
DL-Sterlin Griffin -Inkster
DL-Shawn Sinawe-Ann Arbor Pioneer
LB- Dion Shepard-Romulus
LB-Gerald McCants-Robichaud
LB-Dan Easterday-Tecumseh
LB-Kurt Lymburner-Pioneer



Next Level chose Inkster Coach Greg Carter as Coach of the Year.



Inkster running back, and former Wayne Memorial star, Alan Freeman made the Next Level All-First team for his performance in 2008.

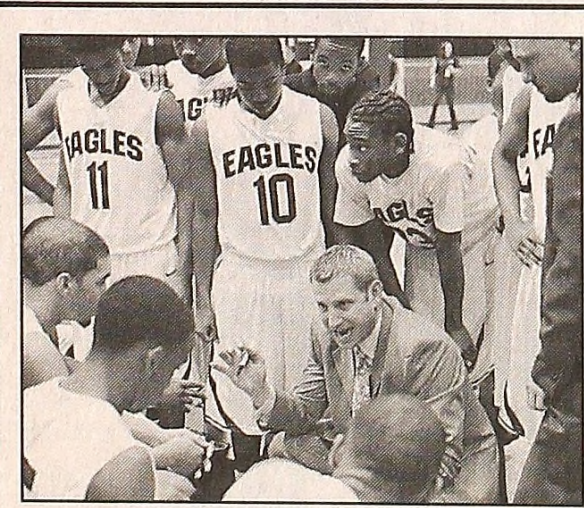
All-Second teams—12 of those players were from Journal World areas. Inkster was the big winner with six players between the two teams—four on the All-First

most athletic player in the All-First group. He is a dynamic running back, defensive back and return man for Inkster. He finished with 1,600 yards on 114 carries and 16 touchdowns. Senior linebacker Denzel Richmond was a force to be reckoned with on the field, too. At middle he flew from sideline to sideline to make big players for the

Vikes all season. Canton didn't win a regional championship, but had plenty of talent on the team. Senior offensive lineman Justin Sneddon helped make it happen. He was a consistent blocker on the line, helping the mighty Wing-T offense that Canton Coach Tim Baechler prefers run smoothly. Malloy chose Inkster Coach Greg Carter as Coach of the Year. "Carter has brought pride and joy to the Inkster football pro-

gram," Malloy said. "He will continue to make this football team a state contender." All-Second team include: John Glenn senior star quarterback Jerome Scales made the grade—and for good reason. He was quick on his feet and could thread a needle with his passes. Wayne senior running back Richard Haley was a force plowing threw the middle and bursting to the outside. Inkster freshman offensive line-

man Marquise Wallace and senior defensive lineman Sterlin Griffin were also instrumental in getting Inkster back to the state championship finale at Ford Field. Romulus senior linebacker Dion Shepard was key in the Eagles' turnaround in 2008. Offensive lineman James Vazquez was a solid player for Dearborn Heights Robichaud and linebacker Gerald McCants proved that he McCould for the Bulldogs, too.



Romulus Coach Nate Oats calls a timeout to come up with a plan. The Eagles trounced visiting Willow Run, 66-50 on Thursday. The team prepares for the Annual Romulus Holiday Classic on Saturday. Photo by Jeff Novak

## Kinney, Romulus Eagles trounce Willow Run, 66-50

Led by senior forward Derrick Kinney, the Romulus Eagles improved to 2-1 on the season with a 66-50 victory over visiting Willow Run on Thursday. Kinney scored 24 points in the outing and grabbed seven rebounds in his first start as an Eagle. "He knows what he's doing," said Romulus Coach Nate Oats. "I didn't expect a 24-point performance, but I knew he would be good for us." The rising star scored 18 of his 24 in the first half alone. Junior forward DeAndray Buckley added 10 points—a perfect 10 for 10 from the free throw line—for the Eagles.

Senior guards Filmore Bouldes and Rashard Porter each had six assists on the night. "We played alright on offense," Oats said. "We were 26-38 from the free throw line, which was a huge improvement from the first two games. Defensively we just weren't very good." Romulus hosts Detroit Finney at 9:30 pm on Saturday, Dec. 27 as part of the seven-game Romulus Holiday Classic. Admission to the showcase is \$10 per person for the entire day. There are no discounts for children, senior citizens, etc. and no passes will be accepted. Games starts at 11a.m.

## Belleville starts season, 3-0

Jeff Novak  
Staff Writer

With a full squad of seniors returning, 2009 could be the year of the Belleville Tigers. Belleville already made its mark on the hardwood in its first three contests of the season. The Tigers knocked off heavy hitting district opponents Wayne and John Glenn in the opening week and demolished Monroe, their first Mega Red opponent, last week. "Expectations are high," said Belleville Coach Don Hickman. "We have a veteran team with almost the entire starting lineup back. We want to win the league and district and I think with this group anything less will be considered unsuccessful." The roster bursts with experience. Nine players return for Hickman and seven of them are seniors. There are some newcomers to team this season but it is unlikely—with the talent and experience returning—that they will see much playing time, according to Hickman. Back in action and leading the pack is 5-foot-9 senior point guard Ricky Love. He's a mover and a shaker in the best sense of the term. He can move the ball and shake off defenders while consistently playing at 100 miles per hour. "It's nice to have point guard come back that knows what has to be done," Hickman said. "He knows

what is expected of him." Love scored 12 points against John Glenn in the 42-32 victory on Dec. 12. Booker Stoudmire, a 6-foot-2 senior guard, is one of the better players in the area with good size and a good shot to go with it. He added 11 points against the Rockets. "He's a great kid and a good student on top of everything," Hickman said. "He works hard and it will be nice to watch what will be a great senior season for him." Senior forward Kourea Hayes is a three-year varsity player. Hickman calls him a "glue guy" because of his ability to hold everything together as a team player and leader. "He does whatever we ask him to do," Hickman said. Nate Hand is a big senior forward at 6-foot-4 that probably doesn't get the recognition he deserves for his versatile play and hard work ethic. "People always talk about Love and Stoudmire but the average fan doesn't realize what Nate Hand does for our team in order for us to win basketball games," Hickman said. "He does all of the little things that we need to win." Vinnie Boyd has the talent to start on most other teams in the state but because of the depth must settle for being Belleville's sixth man. As a talented senior guard he

will see plenty of time in the field. Another big returner is senior guard Alantae Phelan, who could also be a starter on most teams. Junior forward Mohammed Conde is the team's biggest player in more ways than one. He stands at 6-foot-7 and is an emerging star offensively, leading the team in all three of the games to date. He dominated the opener against Wayne, scoring 22 points with 20 rebounds. Against Glenn, he knocked down 15 and captured 15 boards. He scored 15 and secured 13 rebounds in the Monroe contest. Other returning players include senior guard Javon Hopkins and junior forward Chris Primeau. Belleville topped Wayne, 72-62, in the season and home opener on Dec. 12. The defense tightened up in the second game against host Glenn on Dec. 12. There the Tigers only gave up 32 points in the 42-32 victory. Most recently Belleville washed out host Monroe, 52-29, on Thursday. Ten guys scored in the outing and just about everyone had a chance to play, according to Hickman. Belleville takes part in the Romulus Holiday Classic Challenge of Champions Boys Basketball Showcase and will play Gabriel Richard at 6:15 on Saturday at Romulus High.



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 16, 2008

Supervisor White called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor White, Clerk Wright, Treasurer Budd, Trustee Hart, Trustee Jahr, Trustee Ostrowski and Trustee Partridge. Absent and excused: None. Others in attendance: Public Safety Director Champagne, Parks and Recreation Director Ross, Planning and Economic Development Deputy Director Swallow, DPW Director Knepper, Executive Assistant Ireland, Secretary Cline and an audience of eighteen (18).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Budd moved, Jahr seconded to approve the agenda as presented with the following differences. New Business Item #13 to read “Consider reappointments of Ray Bailey and Max Johnson to the Public Safety Committee with terms to expire July 30, 2010.”; add New Business Item #15 “Consider the appointment of Brenda McClanahan to the Public Safety Committee with terms to expire July 30, 2010.”; New Business Item # 9 to read “Consider reappointment of Ted Smolinski to the Planning Commission with term to expire October 1, 2011.” Carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Hart moved, Jahr seconded to open the public hearing to consider the 2008 Amended General Fund Budget and the 2009 Proposed General Fund Budget. Carried.

Supervisor White opened the public hearing giving an overview of the General Fund Budget. The Board has met the task of producing a balanced General Fund Budget. The level of the service to our citizens, which is funded through this budget, remains our top priority. While the township general operating levy is one of the lowest in the vicinity, we continue to provide a highly beneficial level of service to the community and its residents. Public Safety has expanded services due to the passage of the millage request and will continue its level of excellent service. Environmental protection remains funded, as does the increased use of the municipal complex with added programs and open gym times. Our senior program has expanded and membership is at an all time high. Managed development will direct the path of Van Buren Township as we continue to meet today’s economic challenges. Collective bargaining agreements have been reached for Police Officers Labor Council (POLC) Command, POLC Patrol and Dispatch, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Michigan Association of Fire Fighters (MAFF). The Board looks forward to continued spirit of cooperation as we work together. Supervisor White stated included in the Board packet are the 2008 Amended and 2009 Proposed General Fund Budgets, Balance Sheet Modification Statement and Salaried Employee Wage Schedule. In your consideration of approval for these budgets, these attachments are inclusive: A) Revenues in excess of those noted shall be dedicated to fund balance. B) Fiscal year line items; which are not expensed, with the exception of specified reserve line items, shall revert to net income. C) Approval of appendices noted above as part of the General Fund Budget. D) Revenue as “Tax Administrative Fee” is to continue as past practice. The allocated millage for township operations 10.4702, which represents .9144 mill for Township Operations, 4.000 mills for Public Safety and 5.5558 mills for Water/Sewer Debt. E) Adoption by department total. F) Van Buren Township Board of Trustees hereby sets the value for capitalization of fixed assets at \$1,000 for items having a useful life greater than one year. The exception would be computer and technology equipment for which items with values less than \$1,000 will be grouped and depreciated as long as the total of the grouped items exceeds the \$1,000 threshold. G) December 16, 2008, approval supersedes prior resolutions. The 2009 Proposed General Fund Budget expenditures are \$15,688,481 which is an increase of \$623,451 over the 2008 Amended General Fund Budget of \$15,065,030. Supervisor White reviewed 2008 Amended and 2009 Proposed General Fund Budget expenditures line items, noting the majority of the increase in 2009 Proposed General Fund Budget is for the Police Department and for Retiree Health Care Benefits Fund. Supervisor White reviewed the Revenue sources that include property taxes, Public Safety revenues, registrations and licenses, permit fees and State Shared Revenue noting the 2008 Amended General Fund Revenue total are \$11,458,723 and 2009 Proposed General Fund Revenue total are \$11,051,977. The planned transfers for Proposed 2009 are as follows: Reserved Fund Balance \$651,741; Unreserved Fund Balance \$424,527; Landfill Fund \$3,480,236; E-911 \$80,000 with a total of \$4,636,504 in transfers. The total Revenue and Transfers for 2009 are \$15,688,481 noting this is the same amount as Proposed 2009 Expenditures. Supervisor White further stated changes in General Fund Balances with projected Fiscal Fund Balance for Amended 2008 are \$3,149,257 and Proposed 2009 are \$2,724,730 noting this is a drop of \$424,527. The total for Designated/Undesignated Fund Balance for the Proposed 2009 are \$2,724,730. Supervisor White stated the Employees Wage Schedule for 2009 as follows: MAFF 3 percent; POLC Patrol/Dispatch 3.25 percent; POLC Command 3.25 percent with a rank percentage to the Patrol Officers; AFSCME 3.25 percent; Salaried 2 percent and Elected Offices of Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and Trustees will not receive a wage increase in 2009.

The Board had the following comments. Treasurer Budd stated she was conservative in the amount of State Shared Revenues budgeted for 2009. Treasurer Budd further stated the Township will be watching the Building Department permit revenues and are mindful of the current economy. Trustee Jahr stated the Board held a Budget Hearing with all Departments Directors and stressed to all Directors the Boards concern for future revenues of the Township and for all Directors to maintain a high level of services while recognizing the revenues may be declining in the future. Trustee Jahr further requested Director Champagne review the Public Safety Budget noting there are not any major staffing changes in 2009 as discussed during the Work Study Meeting. Director Champagne stated most of the line items stayed the same or decreased with the exception of allocated fringes due to rising cost-of health care and wages due to contractual agreed upon increases with collective bargaining agreement. The question posed yesterday was whether the Public Safety Department has the full amount of staffing to meet the needs from the millage. Director Champagne gave a detailed review and further stated the 2009 Proposed Budget has been budgeted to meet the staffing needs of the Public Safety Department noting there are additional employees to be hired. Board members urged Supervisor White and Director Champagne to work out the details to accomplish the staffing of Public Safety. Supervisor White wants the Board to be cautious of what January 1, 2010 will bring due to the state of the economy and the township should be well rounded in all Departments.

There were no comments or questions from the audience.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

Jahr moved, Hart seconded to close the public hearing. Carried.

Hart moved, Budd seconded to open the public hearing to receive public comment on the 2008 Amended Special Revenue Fund Budgets and the 2009 Proposed Special Revenue Fund Budgets. Carried.

Supervisor White opened the public hearing stating the Special Revenue Funds generally reflect their purpose by their title. The following are the Special Revenue Funds: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA), Capital Improvement Fund, Federal Forfeiture Fund, State Forfeiture Fund, Landfill Fund, Belleville Area Museum, E-911 Service Fund, Bemis Road Special Assessment District (SAD), Lohr Road SAD and Belle Harbour/Lake Crest SAD. Supervisor White stated this information is available in the Clerk’s Office and additionally this information will be placed on the Township website after Board approval. The Board discussed these items during the Work Study Meeting.

Comments or questions from the Board or the audience.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

Budd moved, Partridge seconded to close the public hearing. Carried.

**MINUTES:** Hart moved, Wright seconded to approve the Work Study Session Minutes of December 1, 2008 as presented. Carried.

Wright moved, Budd seconded to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2008 as presented. Carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Director Knepper announced the Van Buren Township Equalization Basin System project recently received the American Public Works Association 2008 Project of the Year Award and a plaque was presented to the Board. The Equalization Basin System project has been submitted for additional state and national awards.

The Board of Trustees presented Max Johnson with a Resolution honoring him for his many dedicated years of service to township by serving on the Public Safety Citizens

Advisory Council and the Public Safety Committee.

A supporter of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) reminded the Board and residents the dangers of drinking and driving and to have a safe and happy holiday season.

Treasurer Budd commented on the Equalization Basin and requested Director Knepper to provide details of the Equalization Basin. Director Knepper gave a brief description of the Equalization Basin stating the Equalization Basin is 1.3 million gallon underground storage tank.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Hart moved, Ostrowski seconded to approve the 2008 Amended General Fund Budget, as outlined in Supervisor White’s and Treasurer Budd’s memo dated December 3, 2008, noting items A through G inclusive. Carried.

Jahr moved, Wright seconded to approve the 2009 Proposed General Fund Budget, as outlined in Supervisor White’s and Treasurer Budd’s memo dated December 3, 2008, noting items A through G inclusive. Carried.

Wright moved, Budd seconded to approve the 2008 Amended Special Revenue Fund Budgets [CDBG, DDA, LDFA, Capital Improvement Fund, Federal Forfeiture Fund, State Forfeiture Fund, Landfill Fund, Belleville Area Museum, 911 Service Fund, Bemis Road SAD, Lohr Road SAD and Belle Harbour/Lake Crest SAD], as outlined in Supervisor White’s and Treasurer Budd’s memo dated December 3, 2008, noting items A and B inclusive. Carried.

Budd moved, Jahr seconded to approve the 2009 Proposed Special Revenue Fund Budgets [CDBG, DDA, LDFA, Capital Improvement Fund, Federal Forfeiture Fund, State Forfeiture Fund, Landfill Fund, Belleville Area Museum, 911 Service Fund, Bemis Road SAD, Lohr Road SAD and Belle Harbour/Lake Crest SAD], as outlined in Supervisor White’s and Treasurer Budd’s memo dated December 3, 2008, noting items A and B inclusive. Carried.

Budd moved, Partridge seconded to approve the 2008 Amended Water & Sewer Fund Budget and the 2009 Proposed Water & Sewer Fund Budget as presented noting this approval will supersede prior adoptions. Carried.

Jahr moved, Hart seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-49 approving the 2009 Fee Schedule. Carried.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the additional engineering fees related to the Drinking Water Revolving Fund project to continue work on the water tower and water main project. Carried.

Hart moved, Jahr seconded to approve the following permit applications by AT&T to install telecommunications infrastructure: PN 7045702 M63129 in the Tyler Road public right of way between Haggerty Road and Morton Taylor Road; PN 7045708 M63110700 for 350 feet on the west side of Sumpter Road between Columbia Avenue and Owen Street; PN 6300340 M63107 in the Elwell Road public right of way for 400 feet south of the Hull Road intersection and in the Hull Road public right of way for 400 feet east of the Elwell Road intersection. Carried.

Budd moved, Partridge seconded to approve the reappointment of Ted Smolinski to the Planning Commission with term to expire October 1, 2011 and to send a letter of appreciation to Chuck Covington for his years of service. Carried.

Jahr moved, Hart seconded to accept Robert McKenna resignation from the Board of Zoning Appeals and to approve the appointment of Robert McKenna to the Planning Commission with term to expire October 1, 2011. Carried.

Hart moved, Jahr seconded to approve the reappointments of Harlan Davenport and Robert Coppock to the Construction Code Appeals Board with terms to expire February 28, 2011. Carried.

Jahr moved, Partridge seconded to approve the appointment of Ronald Merritt to the Environmental Commission with term to expire October 1, 2009 and to approve the appointment of David Wilson to the Environmental Commission with term to expire October 1, 2011. Carried.

Hart moved, Jahr seconded to approve the reappointments of Ray Bailey and Max Johnson to the Public Safety Committee with terms to expire July 30, 2010. Carried.

Budd moved, Partridge seconded to approve the reappointment of Lila Warner to the September Days Senior Citizens Endowment Committee with term to expire January 15, 2010. Carried.

Wright moved Partridge seconded to approve the appointment of Brenda McClanahan to the Public Safety Committee with term to expire July 30, 2010. Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Wright, Jahr, Ostrowski, Partridge and White. Nays: Budd and Hart. Absent: None. Carried.

**VOUCHER LIST:** Budd moved, Jahr seconded to approve the December 16, 2008 voucher list as presented. Carried.

**REPORTS:** None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Recreation Department announced the following events: On Friday, February 13th and Saturday, February 14th the 14th annual Daddy/Daughter Sweetheart Dance will be held in the Van Buren Township Community Center. Also, Boater Safety Classes will be held on February 28th, March 28th and April 25th. For more information on programs or events contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 699.8926.

Deputy Director Swallow stated a number of residents have reported receiving flyers regarding the Michigan Energy Commission noting the Township is not aware of any such agency exists and cautions home owners.

Clerk Wright stated the Township Administrative Offices will be closed on Wednesday, December 24th, Thursday, December 25th and Friday, December 26th for the Christmas Holiday and on Wednesday, December 31st, Thursday, January 1st and Friday, January 2nd for the New Year Holiday.

Treasurer Budd reminded residents the tax deadline has been extended until February 28, 2009.

Santa Claus will be at the Belleville Area Museum on Saturday, December 20th at noon.

Supervisor White stated the recently held Senior Holiday Dinner had approximately 225 people in attendance and all enjoyed an evening of music and dinner. This event was taped and will be aired on the Township Cable Channel 12. Also, the Board of Trustees wished all the residents of Van Buren Township a very happy holiday season with a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2009 New Year.

**AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items):** A resident thanked Director Ross for the improvements to the parks in Van Buren Township. Director Ross stated the Riggs Heritage Park is a green park and uses solar power to heat and light the facility.

Supervisor White clarified statements regarding Max Johnson’s appointment.

**CLOSED SESSION:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Jahr moved, Hart seconded to adjourn at 9:47 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Wright  
Township Clerk

Paul D. White  
Supervisor

Publish: December 24, 2008



# SPORTS

## Plymouth Wildcats return to hardwood

Jeff Novak  
Staff Writer

The Plymouth Wildcat basketball squad has a new look and will rely on athleticism this season—but they are still working out the kinks.

The Wildcats fell to 1-3 on the season with a 57-50 loss to visiting Stevenson last Thursday.

"We should have been up double digits at the half based on missed layups alone," said Plymouth Coach Tom Van Wagoner. "We lost our poise, took some ill-advised shots and turned the ball over during a key stretch of the game."

Stevenson took to the line 28 times, making 18 shots, while Plymouth made just 4 of 10 from the stripe.

Plymouth led, 24-21, at the half but couldn't hang on. Stevenson found its rhythm in the second to outscore the Wildcats, 17-9, in the third and 19-17 in the fourth frame.

Just three non-conference games into the season, Van Wagoner said he isn't too concerned, yet.

"This young team is improving and gaining experience as we go," he said. "We will be much better soon."

With the graduation of six high-caliber seniors in June, the team has a whole new dynamic for its 2008-09 campaign. The new-look

team consists of six seniors, five juniors and three sophomores.

Four of the 14 players are extremely active in sports outside the basketball realm, contributing to the high level of athleticism that is anticipated this season.

On the down side the team only returns about 10 percent of their scoring from last year, according to Van Wagoner.

"We lost six seniors that contributed largely to victories over rivals Canton and Salem twice, including a school first state tournament victory over Salem," Van Wagoner said. "We will be young and athletic, looking to gain experience while having success (this year)."

The seniors include guard Brad Lineberry, who recently signed to play baseball at Madonna University. Zack Hamed just finished a stellar year as a wide receiver and defensive back with the football team.

Cliff Buttermore is a sharpshooter who is also an ace on the mound for the baseball team. He has already stepped up as one of the team's leading scorers, knocking down double digits in each of the first three contests.

Buttermore lead Plymouth with 14 against Stevenson, scored 10 for the Cats in their season and home

opener against South Lyon East and 10 against Dexter two days later. Van Wagoner classifies senior Jordan Jones as a high-wire player and Ryan Spencer an energy player. Jones added nine points against East, including a slam-dunk and a tip-in late in the contest.

Once healthy, senior Mike Rose—a football and baseball standout—will be a leading rebounder, according to Van Wagoner.

Van Wagoner said that junior Dion Johnson—who added 10 points in the opener—is a creative and solid contributor and that hard-working Adam Skubik and newcomers Alontae McElhaney, Marquee Taylor and Aaron Thompson will all make a difference. Taylor led the team with 13 points last Tuesday.

The sophomores include 6-foot-6 Justin Moss, who scored 12 against East, and Brennen Beyer and Mike Nadratowski—both can be difference-makers, according to Van Wagoner.

Nadratowski knocked down 11 points to lead Plymouth against Dexter and Moss dropped 13 in the team's latest effort against Stevenson.

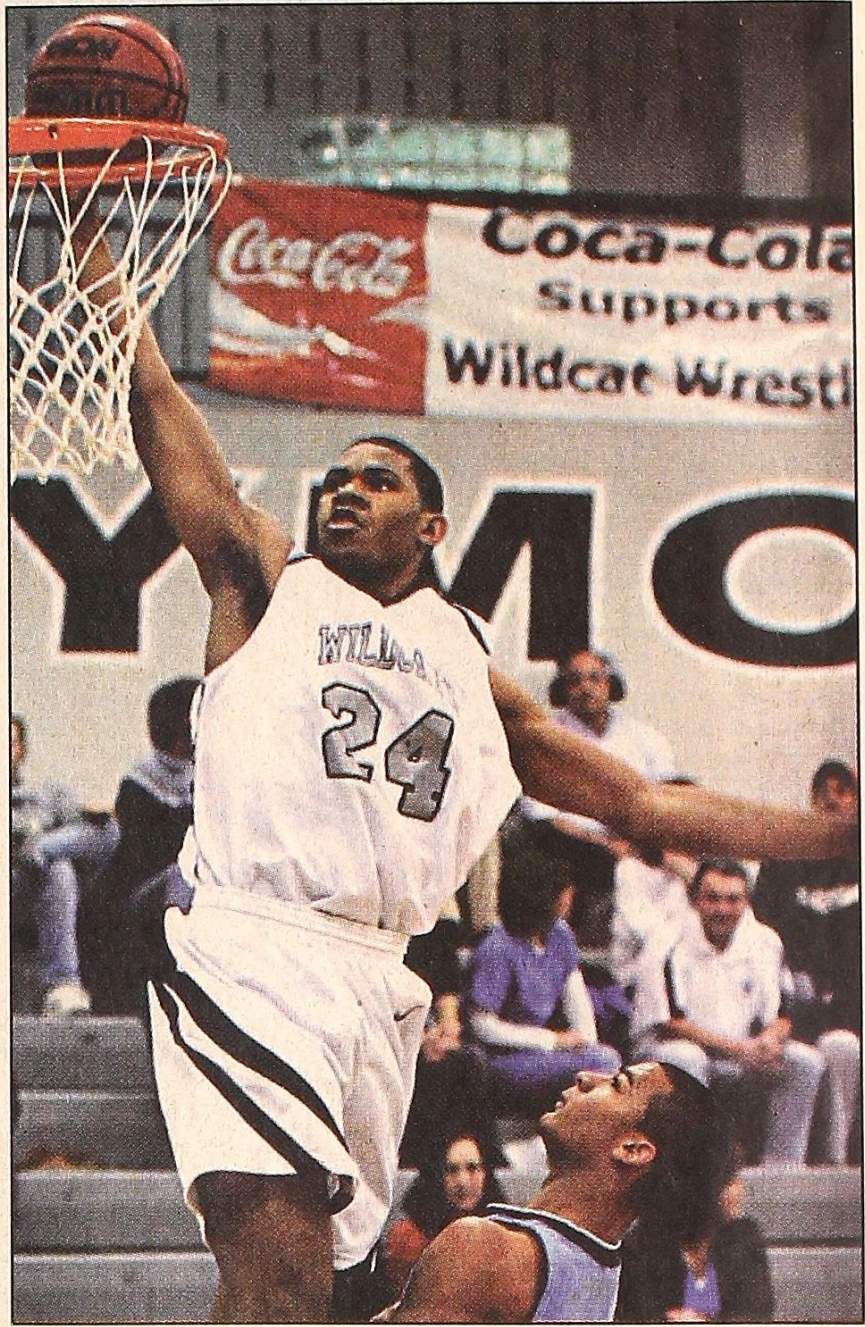
Plymouth trounced South Lyon East, 74-34.

Against Dexter, the team struggled in the second quarter and couldn't regain the ground they gave up.

The two teams went shot for shot in the first and were squared away at 9 after eight minutes. Dexter outscored the 'Cats 15-5 in the second. But Plymouth battled back after the half to come within one—34-33. Dexter sank its shots from the line down the stretch to hold the Wildcats at bay. Dexter was 12-17 from the stripe.

"Down the stretch we had chance after chance to make plays and did and got it done, Van Wagoner said. "A little bit of experience versus inexperienced panned out and was the difference."

The Wildcats are off until after the New Year when they head to Southgate Anderson at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 6.



Plymouth's Justin Moss (24) goes up for a layup against Stevenson defender Austin White (2) on Thursday. Photo by Ken Garner



Brennen Beyer (42) snags a rebound for Plymouth against a host of Stevenson defenders on Thursday. Photo by Ken Garner

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The Michigan Slammers 12U baseball team hopes to raise enough money with their New Years Party to send them to Cooperstown.

## Slammers aim for Cooperstown

Jeff Novak  
Staff Writer

Every young baseball player dreams of playing baseball where it all began—Cooperstown.

For the Michigan Slammers 12U baseball team that dream could be a reality.

The 13 players that make up the 12U Slammers received a once in a lifetime offer to eat, sleep and play baseball against other teams their age for a week at Cooperstown.

The problem is getting there. That's why the parents of the Michigan Slammers team have put together a New

Years Eve fundraising party in hopes of offsetting some of the costs of the trip. Anyone—individuals or groups—interested should call Mike McWilliams at (734) 740-8899 to RSVP by December 28, 2008.

The party will take place at the Hawthorne Valley Country Club in Westland on Merriman and Warren. The price is \$60.00 per person and includes a dinner buffet, open bar, a D.J., dancing, with raffles and more. Doors open at 7 p.m. and casual dress is welcome.

Any donations or sponsorships are also welcome. For more information or questions, please contact Mike McWilliams at the number above.

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# CLASSIFIED

01. Obituaries 02. In Memoriam 03. Cards of Thanks 04. Monuments & Cemetery Plots 05. Personals/Announcements 06. Legal Notices 07. Attorneys 08. Entertainment 09. Lost & Found 10. Coming Events 30. Help Wanted	31. Help Wanted Sales 32. Help Wanted Drivers 33. Child Care 34. Specialized Services 35. Situations Wanted 40. Business Opportunity 42. Health and Fitness 43. Money to Loan 44. Music/Art Lessons 45. Adult Care 46. Private Schools/Instruction 47. Riding/Horses/Stables	50. Pets & Supplies 54. Rummage Sales 55. Estate Sales 56. Flea Markets 57. Antiques 58. Garage and Yard Sales 59. Auctions 60. Misc. Sales 61. Misc. Items 62. Building Supplies 63. Business and Office Equipment	64. Lawn & Garden Supplies 65. Tree Service 66. Landscape / Nurseries 67. Garden Plant / Supplies 68. Garden / Produce 70. Masonry / Brickwork 72. Cleaning Services 73. Musical Merchandise 74. Sporting Goods 75. Boats / Accessories 76. Remodeling & Renovations 77. Recreation Vehicles	78. Hunting / Fishing 82. Wanted to Buy 87. Room for Rent 88. Duplexes for Rent 89. Apartments for Rent 90. Condos/Townhouses for Rent 92. Business Places for Rent 93. Banquet Halls 94. Farm Land for Rent 95. Real Estate 96. Houses for Rent 97. Cottages for Rent	98. Mobile Homes for Rent 99. Flats for Rent 100. Will Share 101. Wanted to Rent 102. Storage 103. Business Property for Sale 104. Farms & Acreage for Sale 105. Mobile Homes for Sale 106. Houses for Sale 107. Condos/Townhouses for Sale 108. Lake and Resort 109. Income Property	110. Lots for Sale 111. Out of State Property 112. Commercial Lease 113. Real Estate Wanted 114. Auto Accessories 115. Autos for Sale 116. Antique & Classic Cars 117. Trucks & Vans for Sale 118. Freebies 119. Auto Repairs 120. Motorcycles 121. Autos Wanted
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**1. Obituaries**

**Butler, Betty,**  
December 16, 2008 age 78 of Westland. Dear sister of the late Clarence and Ed Butler, Bertha Avery, Ethel Vanderbush and Viola Swegles. Survived by many nieces, nephew, great nieces and nephews. Family will receive friends Monday 12pm until 4pm service at the Uht Funeral Home, Westland with Pastor William Moull officiating. Please post a note of condolence at [www.uhtfh.com](http://www.uhtfh.com).

**Theresa J. Dennis**  
Passed away on November 26, 2008, Longtime resident of Plymouth, MI. Beloved Mother of Mike, Pat and Kelly, Sister of Carolyn, Grandmother to 4 grand-daughters. Memorial service will be held on Monday, December 29, 2008 at 11 am @ First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth, #734-453-6464.

**40. Business Opportunity**

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For more information listen to recorded message @ 712-432-1283 pin#408736. If you are interested in this Great Opportunity call Miss Kathy @#313-791-8691.

**59. Auctions**

Notice is hereby given that on 01/21/09 at 3:00pm the following will be sold by competitive bidding at at Stor Room Self Storage, 40600 Michigan Ave., Canton, Mi 48188.

Unit 1129, Ian Smith, Household, Recreational & Misc. Goods; Unit 1218, Leslie Moore, Misc. Goods; Unit 849, Russell Redmond, Household & Misc. Goods; Unit 409, Chad Cummings, Household, Recreational, & Misc. Goods; Unit 832, Rebecca Hammel, Household & Misc. Goods; Unit 317B, Terrance Albright, Household Goods.

Notice is hereby given that on January 21, 2009 at 1pm the following will be sold by competitive bidding at Stor-N-Lock Self Storage, 7840 N. Wayne Rd., Westland, MI 48185.

Unit #H2C Homer Moore, Household Items & Misc. Items; Unit #E15 Linda Cain, Household Items; Unit #C5, Gerri Kuck, Vehicle; Unit #H20, Grace Guajardo, Household Items, Recreational Items& Misc. Items; Unit #L13, Brandon Brown, Household Items & Misc. Items; nit #P24, Kelly Brupet, Household Items; Unit #D8, Latoya Cordell, Vehicle.

**61. Misc. Items**

**NEW QUEEN ORTHOPEDIC PILLOWTOP**  
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Full Warranty  
\$450

**NEW 5 Pc. Cherry Bedroom Suite**  
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**88. Duplexes For Rent**

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**96. Houses For Rent**

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call #734-266-8220 or #734-765-4455.

**Westland**  
3 Bedroom ranch w/ spacious living room & kitchen!  
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**105. Mobile Homes for Sale**

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plus lot rental  
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**WAYNE**  
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